

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
DOTE-00 EB-08 H-01 INR-10 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00
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P 071502Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3123
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMCONGEN BARCELONA
AMEMBASSY MADRID

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, NL
SUBJECT: HIJACKING OF KLM AIRCRAFT

1. KLM FLIGHT 361 FROM AMSTERDAM TO MADRID WITH 63 PASSENGERS AND 5 CREW WAS HIJACKED AFTER TAKEOFF AFTERNOON OF AUGUST 6 BY TWENTY-YEAR OLD DUTCH STUDENT NAMED PAUL GOKKEL WHO SHOUTED POLITICAL SLOGANS ABOUT RED ARMY FACTION AND PLO. GOKKEL, ARMED WITH A PLASTIC TOY PISTOL, A SPRAY CAN HE SAID WAS A BOMB, AND A BOTTLE HE SAID CONTAINED A DANGEROUS CHEMICAL, FORCED THE PILOT TO DIVERT THE DC-9 AIRCRAFT TO ALGIERS. ALGIERS CONTROL TOWER FLATLY REFUSED PILOT'S REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO LAND. HOWEVER, AFTER INTERCESSION BY DUTCH AMBASSADOR IN ALGIERS, ALGERIAN AUTHORITIES AGREED TO COOPERATE AND LET AIRCRAFT LAND. AT THAT POINT AIRCRAFT WAS OVER MEDITERRANEAN WHEN, ACCORDING TO PRESS AND UNOFFICIAL ACCOUNT, A STEWARDESS AND THREE MALE PASSENGERS (TWO AMERICANS AND A DUTCHMAN) STORMED THE FLIGHT DECK AND OVERPOWERED THE SOLE HIJACKER. THE AIRCRAFT THEN LANDED AT BARCELONA, WHERE SPANISH POLICE REMOVED AND RETAINED THE HIJACKER. THE
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AIRCRAFT LATER FLEW ON TO MADRID. A DUTCH SECURITY OFFICER FLEW TO BARCELONA TO INTERROGATE GOKKEL, WHO IS SAID TO HAVE HAD A HISTORY OF PSYCHIATRIC PROBLEMS. THE GON IS EXPECTED TO REQUEST GOKKEL'S EXTRADITION.

2. THE CRISIS WAS HANDLED EXPEDITIOUSLY FOR A SUNDAY AFTERNOON BY AN AD HOC OFFICIAL GROUP COMPRISED MAINLY OF

READILY AVAILABLE PERSONNEL AT KLM, CIVIL AIR SERVICE,
AND FOREIGN AND JUSTICE MINISTRIES AND INCLUDED FOREIGN MINISTER
VAN DER KLAUW. AND OFFICIAL DUTCH
REPORT OF THE INCIDENT WILL BE PREPARED AND IS EXPECTED
TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AS TO GOKKEL'S DOCUMENTATION AND
CLEARANCE THROUGH PRE-FLIGHT CHECKS AS WELL AS HIS MOTI-
VATION AND MENTAL STATE. GON HAS AGREED TO KEEP US
INFORMED AND WE WILL REPORT FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.
DUNNIGAN

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Message Attributes

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